

INCOMES IN ENGLAND.

Wealthy Men Not So Numerous as in America.

Notwithstanding Which the Wealth of This Country Is More Evenly Distributed—Facts Gleaned from Figures.

If the evidence of the British government returns showing the number of persons assessed for the income tax is trustworthy the number of very rich people in the United Kingdom is small. Only 250,000 subjects of the queen confess to an annual income of over \$1,000 a year derived from trades or professions. The whole number of them who live on the scale represented by a family income above the \$1,000 mark, derived from any source, is set down at about 2,000,000, or one in nineteen of the population. In other words, says the Baltimore Sun, not more than 5 per cent. of the inhabitants of England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland are living in the moderately well-to-do state, implied by a family income of \$20 per week. Going up in the scale of incomes we learn from these official returns that 123,000 British families, aggregating 615,000 persons, are all who are in receipt of incomes of \$1,500 a year and over. Commenting on these figures the Westminster Gazette says of the limits of wealth and income in the realm of Victoria: "The possession of what is ordinarily termed a modest income, of anything, in fact, above \$150 (or \$750) is a rare stroke of fortune, which comes to very few in this world, while the chance of becoming a Cæsar is so wildly remote that it will hardly enter into the calculations of a reasonable man." It appears that about 5,000 persons in the whole United Kingdom have incomes of over \$25,000 a year. Gen. Booth some time since took a servant girl census of London and found that only 94,000 houses in that city hired any servants at all, and that in one-half of that number there was only one maid-of-all work employed. And this in the richest city of the country, containing one-ninth of its entire population.

Making due allowance for the fact that Britishers, like mankind generally, can be trusted not to overstate their incomes for purposes of taxation, it is still evident that the wealth of this country is not only greater than that of Great Britain, but that it is better distributed. Far more American families than British have incomes exceeding any given figure above \$1,000 a year. As against the 5,000 British families with incomes of \$25,000 a year or larger, the famous tabulation made by Thomas G. Shearman shows that there are more than twice as many American families possessing that degree of wealth. These Shearman figures have not been disputed by anybody, and, if true, they show that at least 400,000 American families, or 2,000,000 persons, live on a level of comfort represented by an income of \$2,000 a year or more, as against the same number living on the \$1,000 a year plane in England. It

is estimated that 85,000 persons will be called upon in this country to pay the new income tax on incomes exceeding \$4,000 a year. The British parliamentary returns indicate that this is three times as many persons as are assessed over that figure by the queen's tax collectors. On the whole it seems safe to conclude that the average incomes of families in the United States are still higher than in the most favored, or at any rate the best governed, country in Europe. Wealth is still distributed more evenly here than anywhere else in the world.

ALL HAD SEEN HARD LUCK.

The Actor and the Man Who Rents Out—done by the Dry Goods Clerk.

"I think," said the actor, "that the toughest luck I ever ran against was when I was playing Lorenzo in a comic opera company which I prefer shall be nameless for reasons of my own. We had an engagement at a pavilion in a summer garden. It was a good engagement, too, and we went out there with our hearts as full of hope as our pockets were empty of money. It happened, though, that we struck one of those nasty cold summer months. This was the coldest that I ever saw. It was positively arctic. But the place was popular and a lot of people came on the first night. Show was a dead frost, though, and we had to walk back."

"Didn't the people like it?" asked the Buffalo Express man.

"Couldn't tell. You see, there was a big crowd, but it was so blamed cold that they all wore ear-muffs and couldn't hear the gags."

"Huh," said the man who rents, "that ain't a marker to the luck I had to-day. Here I am a man with a sick wife and a lot of other things on my hands, and when I got home to-day I found that it would be absolutely impossible for me to stay there any longer. All there is to it, I've got to move. When you think that my wife is flat on her back, you will realize what an affliction that is. I've got to move; think of it."

"Well," inquired the reporter, "what have you got to do that for? Shy on the rent?"

"No; I'm not shy on the rent, but a lot of my old creditors found the place the other day, and there's nothing to do but get out of their way."

"You fellows make me laugh," said the dry goods clerk. "You actually make me laugh. You talk as if you knew what hard luck really is. Why, you ain't in it with me! I had a job as floor walker that paid me thirty dollars a week. Part of my duties were to paint the signs used so extensively in the store. I always was handy with a brush, you know. I had a big sign to paint for the candy counter last Wednesday. It was to read 'Fresh To-day,' meaning some particular kinds of candies. I painted it, but an infernal imp of a boy who worked in the store painted another just like it that read 'Fresh Toddy' and hung it in place of mine. The highly moral head of the firm had a fit when he saw it and fired me without giving a chance for an explanation."

AN IMPRESSIVE TRAIT.

A Queer Man Who Made a Friend by Respect for His Mother.

During my bohemian days it occurred that I sat in an uptown cafe with the sort of a man whom this incident will reveal, says a writer in the New York Press.

A wild-looking, unkempt chap, gaunt, shabby, with a four days' growth of beard, rushed in, looked wildly around and then hurried over to my companion and took him aside. As a result of their conversation the man with me turned to me and said in a whisper:

"I am going to ask you to loan me two dollars, but don't you do it."

Then he asked me and I refused the loan, and the gaunt man went unsteadily out.

"Queer duck, that," said the man at the table with me; "always getting into scrapes, taking out opera companies and leaving them stranded. The last scrape he got into was in Montreal. He telegraphed home: 'I am in jail on a technicality, but don't tell mother.' That struck me as very funny. 'Don't tell mother.' But he was always an ill-balanced ass, anyway."

Now the thoughtfulness of his mother in the young man who wanted to borrow two dollars struck me as a rather deserving trait, and I left my companion abruptly and followed him out. I saw enough of him to convince me that he was not a man of business, and not even an admirable character. However, I loaned him the two dollars. Since then he has been considerably in the public view in many ups and downs. But he is now coming home from the other side as the impresario of a lot of continental stars. I wish him well. Like Mark Twain I love a man who never shakes his mother. This one's name is Robert Grau.

AMERICAN RICE PAPER.

The Chinese Tree Is Now Successfully Grown in Florida.

The rice paper tree, one of the most interesting of the flora of China, has recently been successfully experimented with in Florida, where it now flourishes with other subtropical and Oriental species of trees and shrubs. When first transplanted in American soil the experimenters expressed doubt as to its hardiness, fearing that it would be unable to stand the winters. All these fears have vanished, however, and it is now the universal opinion that it is as well adapted to the climate of this country as to that of the famed Flowery Kingdom.

It is a small tree, growing to a height of less than fifteen feet, with a trunk or stem from three to five inches in diameter. Its canes, which vary in color according to season, are large, soft and downy, the form somewhat resembling that noticed in those of the castor bean plant. The celebrated rice paper, the product of this queer tree, is formed of thin slices of the pith, which is taken from the body of the tree in beautiful cylinders several inches in length.

The Chinese workmen apply the blade of a sharp, straight knife to these